11/8/74

Ossa on Pelion
cupola'd coop
~~of~~ R
O God! / O ole Academis

(p6) haunts eagle-heights

of Epoch's Notes
pp 267 - 277

(1)

c/o The Little Cottage of Mary
Calvary Nursing Home
Harrow-on-the-Hill
Middlesex
England

Die augusti 11
1974.

Dearest René

your letter & the ~~typ~~ typewritten pages of parts of your study of my stuff arrived safely this morning, firstly I would thank you very much indeed — what an appalling labour for you it must have been ~~to~~ write this thing for the Welsh[ing]. — I very much thought you chose the extracts from my letters etc. the things ~~that~~ to shed light on my attempts over the years, but before I go on I'll try to answer the questions headed 'Text & Fortune'

~~Re~~ Ref Ossa on Pelion. I fear I many used the names analogously ~~to mean what~~ as you say 'a reversal' intending & thought I'd heard chaps ~~use the tag~~ use the tag 'Pelion on Ossa', & might have said (let's ~~pile~~ Follow Elis on Olympia now) or Omega is first & Alpha last, or what you will & wrote (it's Ossa on Pelion now) without a thought except that I thought it served as ~~the~~ the context of that page of reversals

~~down~~ among the altitudes
with all their help-heights.
down
as low as Parnassus

Since under.
Where's Ark-hill?

Ask both the Idas
for the first 5 lines I on this unabiding rock/
for the Great Summas/
lifted up/
by next Great Winter
down
among the ~~about~~ altitudes

Can't answer yr question as to p. 55 more than that.

OVer

Thanks for post thus separate as it furnishes the invite
Post ~~this~~ any Comments on the typewritten text
as soon as I've read it — for my things my meanings
Get 55 Quickly for the envelope.
Love

P. 64

Con flora ~~valida~~ ... ~~con~~ fauna ~~fria~~

~~well~~ y ~~what~~ that ~~meant~~ to be ~~the~~ Spanish

~~and~~ the reason is accidental ~~except~~ that

I liked the sound of the ~~contr~~ contrasted

forms for cred & ~~but~~ & it so happened

that I ~~took~~ about the glacial & geological

chances ~~I~~ I ~~had~~ in Tom's house, had a

note for a German scholar ~~translate~~ into

Spanish, and also became Tiger Dawson

and told me (and I ~~link~~ think mention in this ~~page~~

Age of the Good) that the earliest known

Cuelgo, with cupola'd roofs were in

southern Spain at an incredibly early period

~~even~~ in the late palaeolithic or early

neolithic epochs — ~~and~~ when the techniques

were forgotten for many many centuries

but about this I can say nothing for

I may have got ~~almost~~ all wrong.

But I know the ~~discovery~~ discovery

~~was~~ astonished the archaeologists of

that time. So I can see, while it was

due to a number of accidents that ~~use~~

those terms, ~~they~~ happened to

be just what I wanted as modern poetics.

~~the~~ swaying to & fro are these

periods of time of the various 'ice ages'

~~the~~ wide areas of tundra

followed by a bit of a warm up &

then a great ~~push~~ ice offensive.

'Who is able to abide an frost!'

& you guessed rightly that Jerry

was skulking somewhere behind

~~my~~ me & the woods that is a

very ~~long~~ long way about away.

Page 60. O God! / O the Academics!

As far as I was, or am, aware ~~that~~ those

exclamatives were came to me naturally

when I considered ~~the~~ splendour of

the forms, ~~the~~ vigour and ~~creativity~~ creativeness

as shown forth from (for instance) the

Lascaux cave paintings of many, many,

millenia B.C. & not only of these works

of prehistory but innumerable art forms

from various times & peoples, (Multifariam

~~multis~~ que modis!) ~~and~~ total

Contd on (3)

575.

(3)

The work of ~~the~~ Celtic antiquity during the 1st Millenium B.C. in Middle Europe, first the Hallstatt culture & the the more subtle art of La Tène ~~which~~ latter developed sheer refinement in these islands. What an extraordinary ~~thing~~ thing it was that a real and seemingly innate thing this Celtic thing - borrowing from sources of all sorts immediately ~~[illegible]~~ made of whatever came their way an asymmetric abstraction e.g. - the Macedonian coin I think of Philip of Macedonia or Alexander the Great issued it in the 4th cent BC. — I thought it was called a stater or sator but can find no such word in any book I have here, anyway it ~~was~~ on one side it had a chariot with horses, well the Keltoi adopted this into an ~~[illegible]~~ abstract pattern of ~~[illegible]~~ slightly raised round boss shapes forms & ~~[illegible]~~ lines of ~~[illegible]~~ perfect relationship & again the bronze head of torque-wearing lord from Prague, looking exactly like a ~~[illegible]~~ Welshman known throughout modern Wales as a ~~[illegible]~~ Non conformist Minister & great eisteddfodwr, that is this 5th cent B.C. warleader a coiled ~~pattern~~ abstract pattern of lines on both sides of his eyes & elsewhere on this quite 'realistic' Portrait I used it in that article I send about 10 years ago for The Listener in a talk called The Dying Game

And, of course, after the break of the Roman Imperium in Britain, this art form reasserted itself - and in Ireland the marvels of unprecedented beauty re-emerged - under Xtian auspices, to name but few among so much the Darrow Book, the Kells Gospels, and the ~~Lindisfarne Gospels~~ Lindisfarne Gospel Bk. though the latter is the work of some Angle scribe all the Northumbrian Christianity owes its beauty to the coming of Dalriad Irish (Scotti) having established themselves on the western shore of Scotland with the chief fortress at ~~[illegible]~~ Dunadd just north of the Clyde so not far from the Brittonic capital at Dumbarton, its fort being Alclut or Petra Cloithe, the Rock in the Clyde.

I fancy it was Aidan who came right across sea & land from Iona to bring the Man to the Northumbrian Angles & become Bishop of Lindisfarne & had come to Northumbria at the invitation of King Oswald had himself been in Ireland before he became King of Northumbria in I think c. 630 AD.

As to St Columba of Iona, as you know he was of royal line of ~~Ulster~~ Dalriadic Ulster and all the subsequent abbots of Iona ~~with~~ were relatives of his. I suppose the truth is that unless you were of very powerful connection you could not get any chaps to obey you - whether this was in affairs of state or matters of religion. After all, it was the dominance of Columba at the synod of Drumceat that saved the bardic schools from extinction & thus saved the whole tradition of the Goidelic Celts for another thousand years, from sometime in the 6th Cent. until the ~~[illegible]~~ Elizabethan conquest & 'flight of the Earls' in the 16th Century.

The other Irish ecclesiastics at Drumceat ~~[illegible]~~ wished to close the bardic schools as ~~being~~ conserving pre Xtian tradition but the Columba frowned upon none that - and his command prevailed -

Later Found in a book called The Course of Irish History edited by T W Moody & F X Martin a reference to the legend of the Convention of ~~Drom~~ Druim Cett in 575. When the poets were said to have been rescued from banishment by the ~~intercessof~~ intercession of Colum Cille

Can't remember how its spelt.

Druim Cett sounds authentic.

Yes yr skull

over (4)

(4)

~~1960 re 'Academic' Interlude~~

~~Of course the constant~~ contrast I was trying to make ~~between the visionary~~ qualities of the 'primitive' works of man-the-maker as shown forth in the Lascaux limestone ~~that~~ & ten or twenty or forty centuries B.C. but also shown forth in all manner of cultures ~~over~~ the ages, especially in the 'Spring time' of those cultures & in works ~~of~~ by individuals or ~~groups of artists~~ sometimes groups of artists ~~—~~ the Fyrtles of the middle ages the Frogs of the 18th Century - maybe, makes one cry out 'Good God!' Beast the Academies — maybe unjustly like ~~Pablo~~ William Blake's shouts of Reynolds. in strong terms of ~~abuse~~ anger as in Blake's ~~attack~~ to Sir Joshua's discourses — 'Hatred' - 'Hatred' ~~is a cloak~~ to ~~cover~~ other ~~approach~~ —

(4)

P60
re Academies
continued.

But my outcry ~~to~~ the Academies! was, sometimes, automatic when I considered the work of those men of the Aurignacian culture who lived on the tundra & the depiction of ~~the~~ in the ~~caves~~ inmost caves of the animals hunted the artists being valued as magic-priests in the sense of making artefacts that worked literally aid by the work the strenuous & dangerous work of the hunters far on the ringing tundra for if they failed there could be no life-giving food to sustain the tribe in short the work on the ~~the~~ tundra & the work within the limestone caverns were essential to the life of that culture, whereas the 'Academies' ~~were stuck~~ obviously showing were ~~of no consequence~~ showing a necessity a 'luck'. But ~~of the past~~ cultivated an art patronized by a 'civilization' at a certain phase of its development can Art, and, at its best, ~~was~~ could be of inner beauty.

As you know, in England, Sir Joshua Reynolds deliberately wished ~~to~~ the arts of Drawing & Painting etc to be among the Liberal Arts — so ~~that~~ that the cultivated amateur appreciate, even practice, ~~painting~~ painting etc.

~~Mithras~~ on 5

5

Without feeling that it was not on a level
with the study of Classical literature etc
I dont know where in Liberal Arts it would stand
the Trivium of Ingrammar, rhetoric, logic, or the
Quadrivium of arithmatic, geometry, astronomy, music
& the 18th Centy, Cust & I'm told some faint echo
of it accounts for the Oxford division of Greats & Mods
& a similar division the Classical Tripos at Cambridge.
Of course, for many, most in your feeling that
O God! O the Academic!' many would
[illegible] strike some memory of Maritain
or Society French — but when I
wrote the words sometime in c. 1947 or 48
the expression came out spontaneously, & in consulting
my dictionary I saw how the animals
which outside on the ice-bound limestone
of the windy hillside were making
their way over the undulating
& [illegible] kind of [illegible] manner
the shepherds without that they might
be sure and make victims of the
great thick-fleeced fauna, for otherwise
the flock would soon give rise to the
Archetypal ground of the artist [illegible] in
work as necessary as the natural branches
of [illegible] community.

Your feeling that the words 'O God!
O the Academic!' [illegible] some echo of
Maritain or [illegible] French might well
be based on some forgotten thing.
But, for me, working there in September
1947 or 48 in Mr Carlile's room on

6

Harrow hill, ~~they~~ came as a natural exclamation.
but that does not, of necessity, rule out
a forgotten connection with the mind of the
1920s, or 30s when Maritain was more in
our minds.

Cantos eagle-heights under. Well, I do recall
having a ~~bout~~ bit of a "fight" within the
tortoise of my skull" about because I wanted
a certain sound & mean in the ~~form~~ feel of
that line — I wanted the 'content' to
precede what I had seen of the
heights of the Pyrenees which I was
then in Salies & also at the Hagenau's
outside Lourdes — & for some reason
I wanted 'Cantos' as well as 'heights'
& a ref. of some sort to 'eagles'
& did not want anything that evoked
Switzerland — for one thing I'd never seen
the Swiss Alps — and dont like the look of
what picture or photographs I ever seen
of the place — & for what prudence
told me — she said I'd loath it!
"The eagle-heights" has ~~curvin~~ for back
story — when I was a child I had
a book — I suppose it was a bit of
or a child's verse of Childe Harold
for the Dark Tower came — on the first
was a picture of a ~~stupid~~ mailed man
with some mountains & a great
~~cape~~ eagle winging across the
sky.

or is it Rolands?
is a poem by Byron is it not?

Well a fat lot of use any of this is
in answer to your questions
but thought I'd better ~~attempt~~
it ~~separately~~ first & separately for
~~the~~ the typescript ~~of~~ ~~the~~ text numbered
29 to 37 & 42 to 47 & on separate sheets or

I may send ~~these~~ these sheets (1) to (6) under separate cover

half sheet marked (20X)

(Pleased say that ~~my~~ Cpd. O That Cadences was
in a Slonimsky street ~~of~~ ray article ~~on~~ Spencer
Tunes on Mr Berenson's Views (1950) and Epoch & Artist
(pp 267 - 277)

(Helen Rivers)

(Please send 9 sets of these proofs to Mrs May Tees dear dear, but what to go through again in case I might want to make a comment of any sort. Love to Dr